

ILLINOIS AGRICULTURAL HIGHLIGHTS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Agriculture has always been a vital part of the lives of Illinois citizens and the economy of the state. Illinois is gifted with some of the richest agricultural resources in the world. The fertile soil, favorable climate, availability of excellent transportation via water, highway, rail and air, good marketing opportunities and a productive work force are some of the many resources that allow Illinois to be recognized as a world supplier of food, feed, and fiber. The variations in soil types, climate and topography in the state make it possible for Illinois farmers to produce a wide variety of agricultural commodities. Approximately 1,500 different soil types can be found in Illinois.

“VALUE ADDED” AGRICULTURE

Food and agricultural product manufacturing and processing contribute significantly to Illinois' economy. Nationally, Illinois ranks among the leading states in the number of food and agricultural processing companies, including ethanol production, meat packing, soybean processing, dairy manufacturing, corn processing, feed milling, vegetable processing and many others.

AGRICULTURAL DIVERSITY

The diversity in soil types allows farmers to grow many well known crops and lesser known specialty crops including alfalfa, amaranth, apples, bell peppers, blueberries, broccoli, buckwheat, canola, Christmas trees, clover, cucumbers, field corn, ginseng, grain sorghum, grass seed, herbs, horseradish, mushrooms, nursery products, oats, peaches, popcorn, potatoes, potted plants, pumpkins, rye, seed corn, snap beans, sod, soybeans, strawberries, sweet corn, tomatoes, winter wheat and others. Livestock is produced using a wide variety of methods ranging from one ostrich in a pen to thousands of hogs in total confinement production. Other agricultural animals raised include beef cattle, bees, bison, broilers, buffalo, catfish, crayfish, dairy cattle, deer, elk, emus, goats, horses, hybrid striped bass, layers, llamas, mink, minnows, rabbits, sheep, tilapia, turkeys and others.

FARMS AND LAND VALUES

In 2005, there were 72,500 farms in Illinois that contained 27.3 million acres of land. The average size of the farms in 2005 was 377 acres. The average per acre value of farm real estate as of January 1, 2006, was \$3,800 per acre, compared to \$3,330 per acre on January 1, 2005. The average per acre value of cropland increased 13.9% from \$3,370 to \$3,840 in 2006.

COMMODITY PRODUCTION

Illinois ranked second among all states in corn and soybean production in 2005. Production of corn for grain during 2005 totaled 1.71 billion bushels, 18 percent less than produced in 2004. The corn yield averaged 143 bushels per acre, 37 bushels per acre less than in 2004. Soybean production in 2005 totaled 444 million bushels, 10 percent less than in 2004. The soybean yield in 2005 was 47 bushels per acre, 3 bushels below 2004.

In 2005, Illinois pork producers produced 1.66 billion pounds of pork, ranking Illinois fourth among all states. Pork production declined seven percent from the previous year. Cattle and calf production during 2005 totaled 679 million pounds, 22 percent more than the production in 2004. Illinois ranked 17th in the United States in marketings of cattle and calves.

CASH RECEIPTS

Total cash receipts from farm marketings in Illinois for 2005 totaled 8.85 billion dollars, 1 percent below 2004. Illinois ranked 7th among all states in total cash receipts in 2005. Crop cash receipts in Illinois in 2005 totaled 6.86 billion dollars, down 2 percent from 2004 and placed Illinois second among all states in total crop cash receipts in 2005. Livestock and livestock products cash receipts in Illinois in 2005 totaled 1.99 billion dollars, which was up 3 percent from 2004 and placed Illinois 24th among all states in total livestock and livestock products cash receipts.

In 2005, corn accounted for 40.3 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois and soybeans accounted for 29.9 percent. All other crops combined accounted for 5.0 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois. Compared to 2004, cash receipts for corn decreased two percent and cash receipts for soybeans were virtually unchanged.

In 2005, hogs accounted for 11.1 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois while cattle and calves accounted for 6.8 percent and dairy products accounted for 3.3 percent. All other livestock combined accounted for 1.3 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois in 2005. Compared to 2004, cash receipts fell 5 percent for hogs, 4 percent for dairy, but rose 24 percent for cattle.